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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BEIJING 002734

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SUBJECT: BEIJING-BASED G-5 CHIEFS OF MISSION ON OLYMPICS
ATTENDANCE, TIBETAN DEPORTATIONS, SINO-FRENCH MILITARY
MEETING

Classified By: Ambassador Clark T. Randt, Jr. Reasons 1.4 (b/d).

Summary

¶1. (C) At the regular meeting of G-5 ambassadors in Beijing July 11, the French Ambassador reported that Sino-French relations have entered a "difficult period" following continuing friction over the Dalai Lama and President Sarkozy's public linkage of his attendance at the Olympic Opening Ceremony with the Tibet issue. While Sarkozy has announced his intention to attend the Opening Ceremony, it is possible that he will only stay for half a day. Japanese Prime Minister Fukuda will attend the Opening Ceremony, but the Japanese remain nervous about potential security threats due to anti-Japanese sentiment in China. While German Chancellor Merkel has never intended to come to the Olympics, former Chancellor Schroeder may attend privately. The British Embassy plans to deliver an Ambassador-level demarche on the topic of consular access following the deportation of a legally-resident and law-abiding British citizen of Tibetan decent, the British Ambassador reported. During a recent mil-to-mil meeting between France and China, the Chinese were particularly interested in France's stance towards NATO and its strategic nuclear policies.
End Summary.

Participants

¶2. (C) UK Ambassador William Ehrman hosted French Ambassador Herve Ladsous, Japanese DCM Kunio Umeda, German DCM Aristide Fenster and the Ambassador July 11 for the regular G-5 gathering of Beijing-based Chiefs of Mission.

Sino-French Relations: Difficult Period

¶3. (C) Sino-French relations have entered a "difficult period," French Ambassador Herve Ladsous conceded. According to the Chinese MFA, French President Nicolas Sarkozy is the only world leader who has openly linked the Olympics with the situation in Tibet, and this link has resulted in several demarches from Assistant Foreign Minister Wu Hongbo. Ladsous has been repeatedly called in and "read the riot act" over Sarkozy's statements. Chinese President Hu Jintao and French President Sarkozy had a "great meeting" on the margins of the G-8 Summit in Japan, during which neither side raised "sensitive topics." However, Chinese Ambassador to France Kong Quan held a press conference prior to receiving a readout of that meeting during which he threatened "grave

consequences" should Sarkozy meet the Dalai Lama during his planned visit to France August 12-23. French Foreign Minister Bernard Kouchner summoned Kong and asked him to "explain his remarks." Sarkozy is still planning to attend the Opening Ceremonies of the Beijing Olympic Games, but is now considering coming for only a half day without his spouse.

Japan: Fukuda to Attend Opening Ceremony

14. (C) Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda will attend the opening ceremonies of the Olympics, Japanese DCM Kunio Umeda reported. However, he expressed concern over the possibility of violent anti-Japanese sentiment re-emerging, as has happened in the past at a soccer match in Beijing between China and Japan. Japanese officials are discussing security preparations with the Chinese Public Security Bureau to avoid similar incidents. Umeda noted that Fukuda raised the topic of Tibet during a bilateral meeting with Chinese President Hu Jintao on the margins of the G-8 Summit, during which he encouraged constructive dialogue with the Dalai Lama. Tibet was not raised in multilateral discussions.

Germany and the Olympics: Merkel Never Planned to Come

15. (C) German Chancellor Angela Merkel will not attend the Opening Ceremony, German DCM Aristide Fenster said. He stressed that Merkel never said she would attend, nor had she ever considered doing so. Former German Chancellor Gerhard

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Schroeder is considering attending in a private capacity and hopes to meet Chinese President Hu Jintao during his visit. Although she will not be at the Games, Merkel will attend the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) in China. The German Embassy has requested a meeting between German President Horst Kohler and Chinese President Hu Jintao on August 6, in advance of the Olympics.

Cleaning Up Beijing: Tibetan Deportation

16. (C) Dechen Pemba, a British citizen of Tibetan descent, was deported earlier in the week despite having a valid work visa. She was not a member of the Tibetan Youth Congress (TYC) and had not broken any laws, UK Ambassador Ehrman said. She was arrested outside of her apartment and taken directly to the airport. She asked to call the Consular division of the British Embassy but was denied permission. British Ambassador William Ehrman himself will deliver a demarche regarding this denial of consular access, particularly since the British had already requested that the MFA give "prompt notice" after detaining or prior to deporting a British citizen. Ehrman noted that Pemba's only crime was "being an ethnic Tibetan," and that currently Tibetans and Uighurs are being kept out of Beijing. Hotels have been given instructions to deny access to Tibetans and Uighurs, and it now appears that even Tibetans and Uighurs already legally present in Beijing are being forced to leave, he added. French Ambassador Ladsous added that the Tibetan boyfriend of a diplomat at the French Embassy left home three days earlier to run an errand and has not been heard from since. Japanese DCM Umeda reported that provincial officials are telling locals to avoid coming to Beijing during the Olympics.

France and China Military Meeting

17. (C) At a recent dialogue between the French and Chinese militaries, the PLA showed keen interest in whether France was changing the standoffish attitude toward NATO it had adopted some 40 years prior under de Gaulle, according to Ladsous. They also pressed the French on why NATO is active in Afghanistan and France's reasons for participating.

Implicit in their questioning was a criticism of NATO's operations in Afghanistan, Ladsous added. German DCM Fenster noted that Chinese think-tank academics laud NATO's presence in Afghanistan as having a positive impact on stability and suggested that the military's aggressive questioning on the subject may indicate a split between the Central Government and the PLA. In addition to the questions on NATO, the PLA also sought insight into France's nuclear policies and deterrence strategies, and quoted from a speech French President Sarkozy gave on the topic of Strategic Nuclear Deterrence while launching a new nuclear submarine in the city of Cherbourg March 21. They were particularly interested in understanding why France lacks a "no first strike" policy, Ladsous said.

RANDT